

**REMARKS**

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

**Request for Entry of After-Final Amendment and Reply:**

Applicants respectfully request that this after-final Amendment and Reply be considered and entered, since: a) it is believed to place this application in condition for allowance without requiring further consideration and/or search, and b) it lessens the number of issues for appeal.

**Status for Claims:**

No claims are currently being added.

Claims 1, 10 and 19 are currently being amended, to respectively incorporate the features of now-canceled claims 9, 18 and 27.

Claims 9, 18 and 27 are currently being canceled.

This amendment amends and cancels claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1, 3, 4, 6-8, 10, 12, 13, 15-17, 19, 21, 22, 24-26 and 28-33 are now pending in this application.

**Objection to Claim 1:**

In the Office Action, claim 1 was objected to because of a minor informality. By way of this Amendment and Reply, claim 1 has been amended to correct that minor informality.

**Claim Rejections – Prior Art:**

In the Office Action, claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26 and 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,721,462 to Okabayashi et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,146,228 to Irani et al. These rejections are traversed for at least the reasons given below.

Presently pending independent claims 1, 10 and 19 have been respectively amended to incorporate the features of "objected to" claims 9, 18 and 27, to thereby place those independent claims in allowable form.

**Conclusion:**

Accordingly, since all of the objections and rejections raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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